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as an Arian Church, but reconstructed for Catholic worship in 570, on one side of the nave the three Magi head a long row of female martyrs who come to lay their crowns at the feet of the Infant Christ held on the Virgin's knee. Indeed such representations are too numerous to recite here, but the contrast of gorgeous royalty with the humble manger was soon lost sight of and the stable and the Virgin's modest array as given by Giotto, in time were changed into a throne and queenly raiment when she received the homage of the three "wise men" turned into kings. As some one has put it: "The representation of a historic legend grew to a devotional expression of fervor." In mediaeval times, even names were found for the three Magi: "Jasper" or "Caspar" was old; Melchior was in the prime of life; and Balthazar was young. In some examples the latter or his attendant is represented black, to indicate that Christ came to save all races of mankind<sup>(1)</sup>. Travelers to this day, wherever they see "Drei Könige" or "Les trois Rois" in front of Continental hotels, or "Three Kings" above the door of an English inn, understand of course that the three Magi are thereby referred to. Without referring "A Friend" to the innumerable important art works which may or may not be accessible to her, the writer may refer her for an elaboration of the above very common theme to two recently published little books easily obtainable: "Our Lady in Art," by Mrs. Henry James, Ch. XI (McClurg, 1910), and "Sacred Symbols in Art" by Elizabeth E. Goldsmith, p. 107 (Putnam, 1911).



### NORWEGIAN CARVED SIDEBOARD

A handsome specimen of Norwegian carving and inlaying was presented to the Museum recently by Mr. Emlyn Stewardson. It was acquired at the time of the Centennial Exposition. It is of oak wood. The upper part resembles in its general decorative plan the ancient retables of mediaeval provenance, being divided into three sections representing religious scenes. These are divided by elaborately carved uprights forming the sides of a framework in which the scenes are set, and approaching the triptych plan. The central section represents the Crucifixion. At the foot of the Cross are the Virgin and St. John, on one side is the scene of the Nativity, on the other that of the Circumcision. The flat surfaces are inlaid in dark wood on a light groundwork of veneer set into the oak. Beneath the top shelf of the sideboard, the central section represents the Last Supper, on either side of which are medallions encircled with conventional decorative motives. The plain surfaces of the lower part of the piece of furniture are inlaid in arabesques and unicorns of light wood on darker wood surfaces set in. Here again are three Biblical scenes in high relief: The Annunciation; the Birth of the Infant Christ in the

(1) See for instance Memling's "Adoration," etc., in the Hospital of St. John, at Bruges.

It is possible that the choice of three may have been influenced by the fact that three in Egypt represented the plural. It is impossible to overlook the great direct and indirect influence of Northern Africa upon early Christian Symbolism. Viewed in this light the three wise men would concretely represent entire mankind.



NORWEGIAN SIDEBORD  
From the Centennial Exhibition of 1876

stable; and the adoration of the Magi. Between are heavily carved half figures in high relief, below which hang heavy clusters of fruit. The two ends are carved with medallions and conventional decorative motives. The round feet are massive. Indeed, massiveness is the characteristic feature of the entire sideboard.

S. Y. S.



### OLD AMERICAN PEWTER

The early history of pewter making in the United States has not yet been written, but it is known that during the first half of the eighteenth century, if not prior to that time, pewter ware was being manufactured in Philadelphia. During the first quarter of the nineteenth century the art of pewter making flourished in Philadelphia, and the Museum collection contains representative examples of many of the prominent pewterers of the period.

An interesting ale tankard bearing the mark of Robert Palethorpe, Jr., who was a pewter ware maker at 50 North Second street in 1817, has recently been added to the Museum's collection of American metalwork. The peculiarity of this example is that it possesses a lid of singular construction, having in the center an open neck, and at one side a circular orifice closed by a cork ball which can be covered by a perforated metal arm which revolves on a pivot. In the upper part of the handle of the mug are three holes communicating with the interior and which can be closed with the thumb of the drinker.

Another interesting accession is a pewter holy water vat with bail handle, made by Homan & Company, who were pewter makers in Cincinnati, Ohio, about fifty years ago. The handle is handsomely chased.



AMERICAN PEWTER